

MORE NEW PLAYS COME IN

Young Playwrights May Learn Much From Gillette

As a Man of the Theatre This Actor-Author Is Still Far Ahead of His Colleagues of the Younger Generation.

By LAWRENCE REAMER.

WHEN William Gillette decided that he would return to the stage and add the prestige of his name to the Frohman fortunes during a more or less indifferent season in the theatre he doubtless thought that nothing would serve his purposes so well as a second "Sherlock Holmes." The material for a play of this kind came to his hand in the short story of Howard Morton. "The Maker of Dreams" was the result—a result which seems destined to be just as agreeable to Mr. Gillette as to the entrepreneurs who benefit by his theatrical activities. There is nothing in the three acts of the new play which has not already proved its value in the dramatic version of Conan Doyle's detective series.

More eloquent as an example of the power of method is the new play at the Empire Theatre. Few unknown playwrights would dare in this year of grace to come before the public with material so slight and what is worse, so improbable as this story of attempted blackmail. Mr. Gillette's rich knowledge of the theatre has enabled him to add no end of interesting detail to this development of the banal.

Even the absurdities into which Mr. Gillette voluntarily led his characters did not, under his practiced hand, serve to shake the confidence of the audience in the proceedings. It took great tact to make the squirmings and writhings of the conspirators anything but ludicrous.

Yet Mr. Gillette's unusual skill was equal even to this result. To be able to accomplish so much ought to encourage the younger playwrights to learn some of the secrets which abound in the wise head of Mr. Gillette. It is no excuse for ignoring technique that it is in the theatre too often employed on material that is unworthy. Its use in the case of what may be more highly esteemed would inevitably add additional value to the subject matter.

William Gillette probably allows himself no scruples on this subject. He never wrote for critical praise. His plays from "Too Much Johnson," which he so cleverly adapted from "Plantation Thomassin," down to the specimen on view at the Empire Theatre, were written to entertain the



Miss DOROTHY SHOEMAKER in "The Man's Name Republic"

HENRY HULL and Miss TALLULAH BANKHEAD in "Everyday"



Miss ALMA TELL in "Main Street" Appearing in Tonight's Actors' Fidelity League Concert Henry Miller Theatre

Miss HALLIE DEANE in "Girl-De-Looks," Columbia



Miss BLANCHE YURKA in "The Wife with A Smile".... Garrick

public. They succeeded wonderfully. Mr. Gillette as a man of the theatre is still far ahead of his colleagues. It would be encouraging to feel that his successor was somewhere in sight. Yet who among the younger playwrights possesses even a part of his skill in playwriting?

Missing in "Everyday."

Two of the most interesting characters in "Everyday" do not appear. One of them, Miss Empire, who personally conducted *Phyllis Nola* through Europe for a period of five years, did seem to be in the hall of the family residence during the first act of Rachel Crothers's play. But she passed out without any revelation of her interesting self to the audience. She was an unusual woman. She didn't only tell her charge all about the Salle Carré at the Louvre and the pigeons on the Piazza at Venice, the rose garden at Westminster and the Poet's Corner in Westminister.

She would have seemed, according to the enthusiastic praise of her pupil in life to be at such things. She went deeper. When their taxi knocked over a street walker in Paris—why do we suspect Paris when no place was mentioned?—on the way to the river to drown her baby Miss Empire took her in. She lived in the family until her end was brought about through a tragedy too sombre for Sunday morning readings.

What an appropriate name! She must have been a masterful person, mentally as well as physically. How we should have loved to get a look at her! Massive brow of course; large, deep-set eyes; broad and benevolent nose. She was really an interesting type. The playwright could well have introduced her. She would have made an appropriate mate for the "Miss Berry Wyman," also undivulged in the flesh.

That would have been a pairing of mighty souls and minds. He made money in such quantities that there was a casual reference to "his last ten

million." Other evidence as to the amount of his fortune may be found in the assertion that it "kept on piling up." What a pile it must have been! Then what noble use he and Miss Empire would have made of it. Miss Crothers really should have brought them together. She had her own plans, however. She never meant "Everyday" to be a tragedy on heroic lines. So she kept them, Titans, at bay.

Then authors nowadays think the public cares most for flappers. What in the world would any flapper be in comparison with Miss Empire? When she gathered her family about her to talk about the prostitute we almost suspect that the returned traveler was in reality seeking *pour épater le bourgeois*. The same thought crept into our minds when she began to talk about her character. But she was a product of Miss Empire's educational methods after all. Great woman that must have been.

Mothers Will Continue.

We shall certainly have the stare mother with us so long as popular actresses must pay the penalty of time and pass out of their first girlhood. There is a whole literature during the last three-quarters of a century written for her. It was not altogether confined to the emotional French drama, although that source did in one way and another supply many examples. But in English there was "East Lynne," which served for so many actresses during the days of its long popularity, and a list of others accessible to the woman past her girlhood. The hysterical writers of the French emotional school supplied many others.



Miss MARY MILFORD in "The Music Box Revue" Music Box

Miss LENORE ULRIC Appearing in "Kiki" Belasco

Miss RUTH SHEPLEY Appearing in "Her Salary Man" at the Cort.

beauty which is like another vaunted beauty, genius.

Language of the Flappers.

It is amazing to observe the striking resemblance between the language of the flappers. It would be quite possible to put into the mouth of *May Raymond* in "Everyday" the same words that are spoken by *Florence*—family name not supplied—in "The Intimate Strangers" and there would not be any confusion. Indeed the powerful dramatic texture of Miss Crothers's play is quite equal to the intensely dramatic quality of Mr. Tarkington's work so neither masterpiece would be damaged by a transfer of the dialogue to the two young women of the play.

Not only must the flappers say approximately the same thing, but they

Theatre Guild Offers Two Plays; David Belasco to Produce 'Kiki'

MONDAY.

GARRICK THEATRE—The Theatre Guild for its second bill of the season will present two plays from the French—"The Wife With A Smile," by Denise Amiel and André Gide, and "Bachelors," by Georges Courteline. Arnold Daly will have the leading man's part in both, with Miss Blanche Yurka playing opposite him in the first and Miss Olive May in the second. CENTURY THEATRE—E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe begin the last two weeks of their season of Shakespeare. The repertoire for the week opens with "Twelfth Night" Monday night; "Hamlet," Tuesday and Saturday nights; "The Taming of the Shrew," Wednesday and Friday nights; "The Merchant of Venice," Thursday night, and "Twelfth Night," Saturday matinee.

CORT THEATRE—John Cort will present "Her Salary Man," by Forrest Rudenstam, in association with Alex. Aronson. Miss Ruth Shepley, A. J. Van Buren, Will Deming and Edna May Oliver head the cast. MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE—The first performance in New York of Strauss's operetta, "Fruchtbringhaus," will be seen.

TUESDAY.

BELASCO THEATRE—David Belasco will present Miss Lenore Ulric in "Kiki," a character study by André Gide, adapted by Mr. Belasco. This French play is in three episodes. The company includes Sam H. Hardy, Max Pigman, Thomas Findlay, Sidney Toles, Raxon Kling and Thomas Mitchell.

Did You Hear - ?

That Andreas Dippel Is to Give Opera in Middle West Towns.

By LUCIEN CLEVELAND.

ANDREAS DIPPEL will start to the Middle West next week to make the final arrangements for the opera company which he will send to a list of cities, although Detroit, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Cleveland are to form the nucleus of the new musical enterprise. There are novel features of the season which it is thought will prevent some of the financial disappointments which have usually resulted from such undertakings. With the Metropolitan Opera Company providing the East and the Chicago Opera Association starting westward at the close of its season at the Auditorium the country, with Mr. Dippel's new scheme, should receive its full supply of opera.

There will be an entirely new system of performances, Mr. Dippel said to the reporter of The New York Herald who sought him out for a description of the new undertaking. "And the season as now planned will begin next October and continue for twenty weeks. It has usually happened that the cities of the Middle West have had their opera when it suited the larger companies and all at once. In Pittsburgh, for instance, the seasons were always given in Holy Week. Then the performances were crowded into two or three nights or at the most a week in other places.

The new company will on the other hand give two representations a month in a city during a period of five months. The company will travel from one city to another in such a way as to give the opera in the most convenient places. The next month the repertoire will consist of two other popular works. The programmes will be in this way changed every month. I have the best artists willing to join the company. Titta Ruffo, Mme. Tetrazzini, Mme. Schumann-Heink, Mme. Matzenauer and Mme. Homer as well as many others of the most famous singers will be heard with the company. The repertoire will include all the popular works in French and Italian. "Carmen," "La Bohème," "Tosca," "Pagliacci," "Le Nozze di Figaro," "The Barber of Seville" will be given in these languages, while "Die Walküre" will be the one opera sung in German during the first season.

Mr. Dippel will start on Tuesday to visit the cities in which the performances are to be given if there is no unforeseen obstacle in the final adjustment of the plan, which will be novel in the details of operatic performance in this country. "I have learned one thing in my experience as director of the Chicago Opera Association in this country," Mr. Dippel said to the reporter, "and that is the utility of giving operatic performances anywhere when financial failure is certain. It is absurd even to go to cities which offer a large guaranty when the expenses will be so great that loss is plainly to be foreseen. I am convinced that operatic enterprise of that kind in this country is already at an end."

Would a Travelling Go.

The difficulties between a popular star and her manager have now been adjusted and they will not part, although that result was expected until Friday. Then it was agreed that after playing for three weeks more in this city the actress should go to Boston, Philadelphia and other cities instead of appearing in the new play which the manager had accepted for her.

The differences between them began in a very unusual way. The young woman, contrary to all usual experience in such cases, would go on the road. She wanted to travel to the large cities of the country. Her contract promised her that privilege and she was determined to stand on her rights. The manager protested. He wanted her in his theatre for the run of another play which he is to produce.

"I don't want to be only a New York actress," this young woman explained, "but I want to make a public for myself everywhere in this country if I can. I know that the metropolitan public is the most fickle in the world. I know that New York audiences have to see you in a reigning success half a dozen times before they even remember your name. I also know that after they have seen you a few times they are likely to express a very decided sufficiency of your presence."

"It is for that reason that I want to travel while I am young enough to have people in other cities like me. I want to make friends everywhere in this country. I know that the really important women like Mrs. Fluke, Margaret Anglin, Maude Adams and Julia Marlowe are not only New York favorites. They have a public all over the country. They are able to draw audiences in every city."

"That's the kind of an actress I hope to be some day, and I am too anxious for that sort of a career to let it go for the sake of the comfort to be enjoyed in this city. So next month I start out and if they like me and my play I hope to act for another year in the hinterland. Then you know that has the advantage of making New York like you a great deal better when you get home."

Alma Gluck as Alma Dea.

"Her Salary Man," which is to be acted next week at the Cort Theatre, is the work of Horace Rutherford of Denver, who is a steel magnate at most times and only a dramatist in his hours of ease. He wrote the new play which is his first work somewhat more than a year ago. He had great satisfaction in writing it and he felt there would be still greater satisfaction in seeing it acted. So he sent the manuscript of "Her Salary Man" to a New York play broker and waited. Of course he waited. That is the fate of the new playwright.

Now Mrs. Rutherford was as Alma Gluck, most popular of concert sopranos, a Denver Miss. Gluck, and her accompanist were invited to supper after a concert. There Miss Jewell met Mr. Rutherford and they were married within a year. So Mrs. Rutherford thought of Mrs. Gluck and her husband. If from a ballet when the play agent sent them no answer.

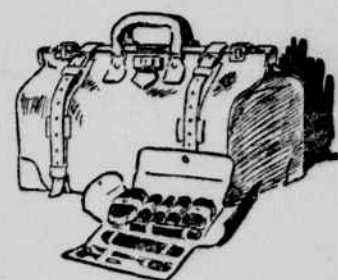
Mme. Gluck got the play and showed it to John Cort. Mr. Cort was so impressed with the work that he immediately accepted it. So in the audience at the Cort Theatre to-morrow night are certain to be Mr. Zimbalist and his wife to see the new play and "root" with other friends of Mr. Rutherford for its great success.

The Provincetown Players will soon produce at their theatre the "Thumb of the Potter," by Theodore Dreiser.



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